

Message Text

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ACTION ERDA-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-06 ACDA-07 CIAE-00

INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 FEAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /118 W
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R 121127Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3344

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 5017

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: TECH EAID GH UR

SUB: REACTOR PROJECT IN GHANA

REF: A) STATE 136325, B) ACCRA 4207

1. EMBOFF QUERIED SOVIET BLOC OFFICIAL RE STATUS AND
FUNCTION OF KWABENYA REACTOR ON JULY 7, 1976 AND LEARNED
FOLLOWING: GHANA HAS REQUESTED THE SOVIETS TO PROVIDE A NEW
REACTOR FOR THE KWABENYA PROJECT ON THE GROUNDS
THAT THE REACTOR NOW BEING INSTALLED IS TOO OBSOLETE. THIS
REACTOR WAS IN STORAGE IN GHANA FROM THE 1966 COUP
(IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING IT WAS OBSOLETE EVEN THEN). THE
SOVIET GOVERNMENT IS CONSIDERING THE GHANAIAAN REQUEST,
BUT THERE IS SKEPTICISM WITHIN THE SOVIET EMBASSY THAT
GHANA CAN AFFORD TO PAY FOR A NEW REACTOR.

COMMENT: SINCE THE SOVIETS HAVE DEMANDED HARD CURRENCY
PAYMENTS FOR MOST OF THEIR NEWLY RENEWED QUOTE AID
UNQUOTE HERE IT IS LIKELY THEY WOULD EXPECT THE SAME
FOR A REACTOR. WITH GHANAIAAN FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES AS
LOW AS THEY ARE AND NEEDED FOR ESSENTIALS IT IS
DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THE GHANAIAANS COULD MANAGE IT.

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2. THE SOVIET EXPERTS AT KWABENYA ESTIMATE IT WILL TAKE THREE YEARS TO PUT THE PROJECT IN OPERATION. THE ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE REACTOR HAS BEEN COMPLETED. THE REACTOR IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST RESEARCH IN MEDICAL AND OTHER FIELDS AN NOT FOR THE GENERATION FO POWER. THE RESEARCH LABORATORIES AT KWABENYA ARE ALREADY COMPLETED. THE GHANAIAANS HAVE TOLD THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN ACCRA THAT THEY WISH THE KWABENYA FACILITY TO BECOME AN AFRICA-WIDE CENTER FOR RESEARCH, NOT JUT A GHANAIAAN FACILITY. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THIS WAS NKRUMAH'S ORIGINAL, GRANDIOSE DESIGN, A QUOTE SCIENCE CITY UNQUOTE FOR AFRICA.
BLACK

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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